

Fight Back

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[0:00] Music Isaiah 59 verse 19 The enemy is busy.

He's not stopped since the garden. The enemy is busy. He's coming in like a flood. Maybe ebbs and flows now and again.

But he's all out. Hard at it. He's advancing his spiritual wickedness in high places. Everywhere we could think of. I know we were praying for governments before. You'll see much of that.

Spiritual wickedness in high places. Christians face many challenges. We face many challenges day by day. We're not immune to it. In fact we promised it.

You know we had a blessed time of fellowship last night. We had some trouble afterwards. A couple folk had a car accident earlier in the week. Their car was parked, damaged.

[1:37] And then some rotter went and smashed the window. And we noticed that last night. And then when I was giving them a bit of aid, my car conked out too. You have trouble.

You have trouble. The Christian life. We're not immune to trouble. It's par for the course. 2 Corinthians 7.5 Tells us we're promised it.

We can expect it. Paul faced it in 2 Corinthians 7.5 For when we were coming to Macedonia, our flesh had no rest. But we were troubled on every side.

Without were fighting. Within were fears. We are in a spiritual battle. We are under attack. Troubled. We hurt our troubles.

But let not your heart be troubled. Troubled. On every side. Without. Within. Yet, even in these dark troubled times, we can have a blessed hope.

[2:36] A blessed hope. A joyful, certain, sure hope. A happy hope. The blessed hope. Our soon coming Saviour. And look through the Word.

I'm encouraged by what the Word says God's saints should do when trouble comes. What God's Word urges you, people of God, what you are to do when you face this time of trouble.

We see, for example, Acts 5. Acts chapter 5. When the apostles were arrested. How did they react? How did they respond? They rejoiced for the honour of suffering. Shame for his name.

Acts 5 verse 14. They'd just been told off by the authorities and then the authorities thought, oh, we'll go easy on them this time. When they had called the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus and let them go.

[3:43] And what did the people of God do? And they departed from the presence of the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy, worthy, counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

Amen. And daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Notice what the people of God, notice what the saints of God do when trouble comes, when they're beaten, they're rejoicing and they ceased not. Satan hates the word of God.

He wants to shut you up. He wants to snatch it away from you. He wants to snatch Christians away from fellowship. Satan delights in dreaming up reasons why.

Reasons to discourage, reasons to deter you. I've heard many excuses. As a pastor, I've heard many excuses.

[4:45] Petty things. Petty, petty things. Ruffled feathers. Offences. Imagined. Hurts. By and large, often trivial things.

Little foxes. Inconveniences. And yet I'm encouraged likewise to. Last Sunday, there was a lady that wanted to fellowship here.

And she's willing to drive over an hour to get to church. Now that's a blessing to me. I think, well, there's lots of people, especially the way the trains are at the moment, might take her an hour and a half to get to work.

One way. You know, when you live out this neck of the woods. So what's an hour to get to church? It's nothing. More often than not, the excuses are laziness, worldliness, and touchiness.

Touchiness. You know, I've at times had to confront people. There was someone in a position in the church and I had to say something to him because at a time I rang and there was a lady answered and I just wanted to question why was a lady there at that time.

[5:53] It was an appearance of evil and he took offence and packed his bags. You know, as a pastor, sometimes I could have speak lovingly, gently, in correction, in exultation.

I didn't mean any offence by it and I sought prayerfully to give no offence by it but to give counsel and support and address what appeared to be a sin issue.

Yet, there's a lot of touchiness, isn't there? A lot of touchiness and there's a lot of laziness, a lot of worldliness and friends, as Christians, we have three enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil and in case you didn't realise it, believer, you are under attack.

Every one of you that love the Saviour, you are under attack. He's got his crosshairs hovering around about you waiting to take a shot. It's all the more reason to cease cease not.

Cease not. Don't quit. Don't quit. Now is the time to launch the counter-offensive. Now is the time. I've seen some little clips, so pray for me for my sinful inclinations watching war movies sometimes.

[7:10] But sometimes, and I don't make a practice of it, it's just now and again, but sometimes you get some little clips of war footage, you know, the landing on the beach at Normandy or the knights and soldiers in the Crusades and whatnot in the old time when they used to ride horses and whatnot.

You see battle scenes and there's one shot where there was a man and it looked like the battle was lost but he grabbed the flag and he went forward.

He went forward and he called the rest to follow him. He grabbed the flag and he went forward. He advanced. He launched the counter-offensive. That's what we need to do, brothers and sisters.

When the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard, a flag.

And we need to rally, to rally the troops, to marshal the troops, to sound the battle cry, advance, to sound the trumpet, not retreat, but advance, go forward, go forward.

It's the time to sound the battle cry. It's all the more reason to fellowship when you're under attack. You need fellowship to encourage you.

[8:27] So we can have words of exultation like, let not your heart be troubled. We need to be here to hear that. Amen? We need that. We need that. I need that.

You need that. We need that. And I urge you this morning, join the resistance. Join the resistance. Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Rejoin the resistance movement. Australia, we are in trouble. And somebody's got to stand. Got to watch it. I used to have a sore hand after I preached a sermon like this.

I'll use the other hand next time. I think this is our finest hour. It's time to launch the counter-offensive. But where is our fighting spirit?

Where is our fighting spirit? spirit? Where has it gone? Where has it gone? I was moved by some extracts from Churchill's speeches of late.

[9:34] Now as much as we don't understand where he was at spiritually, the spirit that he stirred up in the nation was something that galvanised the nation.

It galvanised the people. And we need that kind of spirit today, as it were, that fighting spirit. Not fighting in the flesh or with man's methodology and the weapons of our warfare.

Not carnal. Of course we know all of that. But we know in that time, in that season, at that point, in that place of the nation's history of the Commonwealth, there was an enemy attacking.

And what was Churchill's words? Some of them are like this, we shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight on the seas and oceans.

We shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches.

[10:40] We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall fight in the hills. We shall never

surrender. I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.

We have before us an ordeal of the most grievous kind. We have before us many, many long months of struggle and of suffering. You ask, what is our policy?

I can say it is to wage war by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us to wage war against a monstrous tyrant, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime.

That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word, it is victory. Victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.

Let that be realised, no survival for the British Empire, no survival for all that the British Empire has stood for, no survival for the urge and impulse of the ages that mankind will move forward towards its goal.

[12:05] But I take up my task with buoyancy and hope. I feel sure that our cause will not be suffered to fail among men. At this time I feel entitled to claim the aid of all and I say come then, let us go forward together with our united strength.

I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilisation. Upon it depends our own British life and the long continuity of our institutions and our empire.

The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war.

If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad sunlit uplands. But if we fail, if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age, made more sinister and perhaps more protracted by the lights of perverted signs.

Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that if the British empire and its commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say this was their finest hour.

[13:32] End quote. I don't mean to labour that, but it's something of the spirit of that exultation, whilst a worldly one, I believe you could take some heed of that, that spirit that was behind that challenge to the nation, because we need to fight back.

These are dark days, but this can be our finest hour in the church of the living God. And that great warrior of the gospel, Paul said this, fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. And then 2 Timothy 4, 7, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. You need, we need, to get our fight back.

A lot of Christians are not fighting anymore. We're not fighting the world, the flesh and the devil, it's as if we've surrendered, isn't it? And these are fighting words, fighting words, consent earnestly for it.

Faith, the faith was delivered to the saints, content earnestly for it. And Nehemiah 4, 20, it says in part, our God shall fight for us.

[14:51] We are on the winning side. So let me put it to you, some ways we can fight back, ways that you can fight back. When you face him face to face this week, when the adversary of your soul wants to lay you down and kick you in the guts, when you face those times of trouble, when you face those times of testing, when you face those troubles, you can fight back.

You can fight back. Number one, fight back with praise. Fight back with praise. Bless the Lord, oh my soul. Bless him. Praise him. They departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

Rejoicing. Fight back with praise. Fight back with praise. When faith is under attack, when families are under attack, rejoice, rejoice, rejoice.

When you are under attack, rejoice, brother, rejoice, sister. We can all feel a bit like Phil, honestly expressed. Life throws some things our way and we naturally have physical and emotional times of being down.

Get back up on your feet. Saint of God. Saint of God. Man of God. Fight. Like the people in Jericho, in Joshua 6 verse 20.

[16:23] When you are under attack, praise God. What did they do? Wasn't they weapons that are carnal?

It was praise. It was praise. When they walked around that city of Jericho, in Joshua 6 verse 20, so the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets and it came to pass when the people heard the sound of the trumpet and the people shouted with a great shout.

Have you lost your shout? We need it. We need it. We need some times here today. We need some shouting Christians.

They shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat. Got to get back to the book people. It says they rejoiced. They rejoiced.

We need a shout with a great shout. Open your mouth and praise him. Fight back with your praise unto God. Don't you just love that account of Paul and Silas?

[17:29] What a testimony. What an example of the saints of the living God. Paul and Silas had just been beaten black and blue. Chained imprisoned and at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them.

They prayed and they sang praises. Saints of God we need to keep! on fighting. fight back with our praises. Fight back secondly with prayer.

And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises. Consider the level of your maturity in God. You know I'm surprised when I hear the stories at times of the weakness of people.

The weakness faith. And I want to stir you today to get on your feet man. Get on your feet lady. Don't think wishy washy.

There's no time to toy around. Consider the level of your maturity. How big is your God? How deep is your faith? The battle rages on many fronts.

[18:46] And what's it going to take to stop you? What's it going to take to deter you? Again, there's many examples I could give.

I happened to make contact with an old contact who came to the church and seen what they were all going really great. And something just spilled out of her mouth this lady that I rang.

And she says oh we really love the church but that woman with the bun I hope there's no ladies wearing a bun today there's nobody present that woman with a bun she looked at my kids and we just couldn't come back couldn't put up with that anymore people know who the lady with the bun is she's gone to glory now I think I believe she has she's a believer she's a believer she was a bit gnarky sometimes I can be like that you might come to this church and you might find someone you're taking a dislike to you might dislike me I don't think anybody would feel like that but you might take a dislike to someone here and you think come on get with the program come on what's it going to take to stop you what's it going to take to deter you faith get real get real the lady with the bone I said yeah she's gone now she's she's passed away what's your next excuse I didn't say that I felt like saying that you know toes trodden on what's it going to take to stop different fellowshiping sensitive people funny looks some inconvenience maybe I've seen another church I've seen another church it's in here the blood washed throng the blood washed throng and I've seen some graphic gripping pictures such that I wouldn't relay them to others on the internet of our brothers and sisters persecuted believers you know I thank God that Ian prays for them we all want to pray for them and give as the Lord helps us persecuted believers I saw some pictures of another church another church it was horrible rows and rows and rows of burnt bodies burnt bodies of African brothers and sisters burnt then I saw another shot of some Christians in India walking down the street beaten with rods sewn to the point of death there's another church another church brothers and sisters it's a lot different from our church a lot different but brothers sisters maybe the time will come maybe the time will come that we will have to be in their number that we can be amongst their number that we can be in their tread the saints of the living God martyrs of our God and King believers beaten even unto death and some of you have seen that I know some here even present today you've seen that I don't mean to open wounds in your hearts but thank God for men and women of God thank God for men and women like that thank God for that they're going to have a higher place in glory they're going to wear a more golden crown brothers and sisters how would you measure your maturity today what's it going to take to stop you don't get soft don't get soft don't get softy today it's going to take someone maybe give you a funny look what's it going to take to

stop you come on

[22:57] God can turn wimps into warriors he can turn boys into giant slayers but the end of all things is at hand be therefore sober and watch and pray watch unto prayer fight back some of you are going to quit some of you are going to quit this time next year you're not going to be here maybe even next week maybe I've already offended you you may have good and entirely spiritual reasons to move on and that's good bless God pray for you you may go elsewhere this is not to condemn anyone you may be moved by the Lord to greener pastures to other mission fields this is not to condemn or criticise people wouldn't it be nice though if you say you're going to move we'll write you a card or something just don't turn up Kylie's moving in a couple of weeks moving to Adelaide to live we like to say goodbye if you're going to move physically or wherever to another place to meet with

God's people we trust that we can give you a farewell and you can find another place to serve God that's what we want go on in the spirit of God go in the right spirit pray and be prompted by the Lord as you pray he will guide your way so fight back with praise fight back with prayer fight back with the power of God the power of God examine yourselves whether you be in the faith 2 Corinthians 13 5 there's a story about young William Wilberforce in days gone by he was a key man to fight the slave trade he was in government and he stood up against the tyranny of slave trading and he was tired and frustrated one day he opened up his Bible and something fell out it was an old letter that was written to him by John Wesley shortly before his death and Wilberforce read this letter again and it said unless the divine power has raised you up I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that practice of slavery which is the scandal of England and of human nature unless God has raised you up for this very thing you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils but if God is for you then who can be against you are all of them together stronger than God oh be not weary in well doing go on in the name of God and in the power of his might friends fight back with God's power God's power is behind you it's within you it's before you and the same power that raised up Christ from the dead is living resident within your being if you're saved today tap in to that awesome power it's still available today friends the power of God there's so many scriptures I've run out of time really to tell you all of them but Psalm 91 read it in full for example he that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall apply under the shadow of the almighty I will say of the Lord he is my refuge and my fortress my God in him will I trust surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noise and pestilence he shall cover thee with his feathers and under his wings shalt thou trust his truth shall be thy shield and buckler the power of God is still available today it's here take it and read it grab a hold of the promises fight back fight back with proclamation what did the disciples do when they were beaten when they were told don't speak anymore in that name you know you can speak in any other name but don't lose the name of Jesus but they didn't stop did they they didn't stop as they departed it says that they daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ nothing could shut them up about Jesus nothing could stop them you know a friend of mine a pastor says when he feels the enemy attacking him the most what does he do he says he gets some tracks and he goes and gives them out that's a good that's a good example I reckon when he's feeling like he's getting attacked the most when the devil's doing his hardest he gets some tracks and he goes witnessing fight back with proclamation fight back with proclamation they cease not when you're under attack it's time to launch the counter offensive the counter offensive get that flag and go strike back at the very heart of the enemy's strongholds we've become too casual too passive that's not to say there's a time to rest as we're exhorted before but rest in the Lord sometimes when you rest in the Lord he gives you something to do he puts something on your heart he gives you a word he gives you his compelling constraining love they cease not they fought back with perseverance they cease to not don't quit don't quit march on this is our finest hour our finest hour wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand the enemy of your soul he's still working wearing down the saints let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall read if we faint not be persevering where are the men who will rally to the call today friends to wrap up a quick little picture of perseverance to illustrate it think of this story in 1972

NASA launched a satellite a space probe high near 10 it went out incident beyond 1972 top of the runs technology of the day went out to photograph Jupiter the planet and its moons check out some of the scientific stuff and the scientists thought this was a bold plan nothing had gone beyond Mars before they feared that the asteroid belt would destroy the satellite long before it could reach its target but pioneer 10 accomplished its mission and much much more it went past the giant planet and then Jupiter's gravity held it at a higher rate of speed towards the edge of the solar system at 1 billion miles from the sun pioneer 10 past Saturn at some 2 billion miles it hurtled past Uranus Neptune at nearly 3 billion miles Pluto at almost 4 billion miles by 1997 25 years after its launch pioneer 10 had gone 6 billion miles from the sun and despite this immense distance pioneer 10 continued to bend back radio signals from an 8 watt transmitter 8 watts that's pretty small isn't it think how many watts are in your light globes at home more than would power about as much as would power a bedroom night light was in this little pioneer 10 it just kept on going kept on going kept on going and it accomplished more than anyone would have thought possible maybe that's for you too brother sister keep on going you don't know what's what's still yet to come it's still yet to come

[30:49] God giving us strength to to help in those times friends to Psalm 46 Psalm 46 God is a refuge and strength a very present help in trouble you can bear to read the whole Psalm Psalm 46 therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed and the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea friends the Lord of hosts is with us God is our refuge and strength brethren I count not myself to have apprehended but this one thing I do this one thing I do forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus wrapping up friends press into the battle when the trouble comes let not your heart be troubled trust in him trust in him in the thickest of the fight whatever faces you loss sickness sadness press on the enemy would love nothing more than to see him see him just fall out of the race but this is our finest hour our finest hour

I know I've been using some emotive kind of worldly kind of pictures here today and I'm not meaning to be a dramatist here but it is a fight it's the battle of Australia it's right now it's here now today it's in your heart the world the flesh the devil wants to tear you apart wants to burden you down wants you to stop running the race friends now is the time when we must fight back this is not just some feel good kind of motivational lecture it's about real things a real spiritual battle and now is the time to launch the counteroffensive think of it friends as we see back through history through Acts what did they do beaten for the name of Jesus don't talk anymore about him what did they do they fought back fight back with praise fight back with prayer even at midnight even though you're sore and bruised fight back with prayer with praise fight back with the power of God in you behind you in front of you leading you changing you fight back with proclamation cease not fight back with perseverance they cease not to teach and preach Jesus Christ now more than ever this message is needed in these dying hours of planet earth and friends be faithful be faithful fight back let us pray Thank you.